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SECURITY INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM TO: **MR. DULLES**

Please hold until meeting

Called

This paper is scheduled for consideration by the PSB Alternates at their meeting Friday, 30 November, at 2:30 PM.

[Redacted] is coordinating CIA staff comments.

APG FM

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28 November 1951
(DATE)

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NSC review(s) completed.

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PSB D-17

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SUMMARY

The attached PSB Staff Study on PUBLICITY WITH RESPECT TO NEW OR "NOVEL" TYPE WEAPONS, and on the establishment of a general procedure for the release of information with respect to novel weapons points out that:

The American people must be kept informed to the broadest extent consistent with national security. Weapons information which must be kept secret for security reasons should be kept to an absolute minimum.

Timing, place of release, and source of any public statements regarding new weapons should take into account the effect upon foreign countries.

There is need for a concerted governmental effort to carefully calculate the desirability of any departure from fact in the release of weapons information.

Whether indiscriminate statements about atomic and other novel weapons produce any worthwhile effect on the Kremlin may be doubted, but indiscriminate statements do produce harmful effects in the free world. Terror cannot be used effectively by US if it desires to retain moral leadership over free peoples. US statements on novel weapons must be carefully considered, must be based upon basic US policies, and must take into account the possible and probable effects upon critical world audiences.

It is desirable that the Director of PSB be informed in advance of pending high-level statements.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

APPROVE for issuance to appropriate departments and agencies TABS A, B, and C.

TAB A is draft interim policy-guidance for high-level statements on novel weapons. It lists questions that should be answered before releasing information; states that content must be chosen with the audience group in mind — primary audience group is West Germany, France, Italy and the Middle East, and statements must be based on the policies indicated in the President's reduction of armaments speech. Interim guidance listed includes: emphasize peaceful purposes of novel inventions and that novel weapons are being developed for defensive purposes; de-emphasize the mass effect of novel weapons; we are for control of novel weapons and against city bombing in principle, etc.

TAB B is interim policy guidance to reduce the panic effect by repetition; wide publicity, within security limits, of tactical uses for novel weapons; and wide publicity, in optimistic tones, of the state of our air defenses. It contains also policy guidance to allay widespread panic tendencies when crisis events occur where war or peace is in the balance.

TAB C is interim policy guidance for area media treatment — Soviet area, Satellite peoples, strategic Free-World areas, and non-strategic Asiatic nations.

APPROVE the coordinating mechanism proposed in para. 11d, page 7, that is, constitute a Novel Weapons Information Guidance Committee to continually revise guidance in light of special cases and changes that take place, and to issue national policy guidance on novel weapons publicity.

ASSIGN to State Department the task of preparing detailed interim guidance in conformity with Tabs A, B, and C.

AUTHORIZE the PSB Director to conduct an evaluation of effects abroad of public statements on novel weapons, using the facilities of departments and agencies responsible for the conduct of psychological operations.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D. C.

14 November 1951

STAFF STUDY ON PUBLICITY WITH RESPECT TO NOVEL WEAPONS

PROBLEMS

1. To determine basic policy guidance for the content of governmental statements with respect to the existence, development of, and contemplated purposes of new or "novel" type weapons.
2. To establish a general procedure for the release of information with respect to novel weapons.

DEFINITION

3. For the purpose of this study, novel weapons are considered to include all weapons using atomic power for propulsion or explosion, guided missiles, new biological, radiological and chemical weapons, and any other novel weapons that may appear in the future.

ANALYSIS

4. There is need for broad policy guidance for all appropriate executive departments and agencies on the release of information regarding new weapons, based on considered appraisal of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the release of any particular item of information in the light of the following fundamental principles:

a. Public responsibilities

The very basis of our system of government requires that the people must be kept informed to the broadest extent consistent with the national security. Each department and agency has its own peculiar responsibilities, some of which are statutory, for reporting to the Congress and the people, for justifying requests for appropriations, for the advancement of the public welfare, and for other purposes.

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Security considerations require that certain weapons information must be kept secret, but this category should be kept to an absolute minimum.

c. International repercussions

The present international situation requires that the effect upon foreign countries, whether allies, neutral or potential enemies, should be taken into account with regard to the timing, place of release, and source of any public statements regarding new weapons.

d. Fact and fantasy

With respect to fact and conjecture, or even deliberate fantasy, there is clearly need for a concerted governmental effort to carefully calculate the desirability of any departure from fact in the release of weapons information in order to overcome the inevitable confusion which results from independent report, denial, inspiration and elaboration by various officials.

DISCUSSION

5. a. The fact of American atomic superiority undoubtedly has a deterrent effect on Soviet leaders. Whether indiscriminate statements about atomic and other novel weapons produce any worthwhile effect on the Kremlin may be doubted.

Such indiscriminate statements do, however, produce harmful effects in the free world and impede our efforts to build a healthy international community. They weaken confidence which is needed for recovery. They encourage neutralism and stimulate the urge to stay out of the East-West conflict. They identify the U.S. with war and destruction and help Communist propagandists to fasten the "war-monger" label on us.

b. A totalitarian nation like the USSR may effectively use terror as an instrument of national policy. But terror cannot be used effectively by the U.S. if it desires to retain moral leadership over the free peoples and build a better world.

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c. Within the U.S. itself, ill-considered statements about novel weapons may create a false sense of security, make it difficult to get support for conventional forces, lead to expectation of miracles in war and undermine public willingness to face casualties and sacrifice.

d. It follows that U.S. statements on novel weapons must be carefully considered, must be based upon basic U.S. policies, and must take into account the possible and probable effects upon critical world audiences.

We, should therefore seek to exercise a deterrent effect on the Kremlin by methods as discreet as possible without involving our national leaders in a policy of terror.

We should also present information on novel weapons in such ways that it will strengthen, not shake, the confidence of the free peoples.

THE POLICY BASIS

6. a. Our national objectives, which basic policy guidance must support are:

- (1) To build a healthy free-world community capable of its own defense.
- (2) To deter the USSR from
 - (a) undertaking general war,
 - (b) undertaking further aggression short of war.
- (3) To reduce Soviet power.

b. More specifically, basic guidance on all armaments must be governed by the tripartite disarmament proposal made before the UN General Assembly. The President's speech on this proposal emphasized:

- (1) the good faith of our proposal;
- (2) the inter-dependence of novel-weapons and conventional weapon disarmament;
- (3) our intention to build strength while always continuing actively to seek the reduction of armaments under proper safeguards.

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- (4) Responsibility of the Soviet leaders for continued increase in world armaments.

It is clear that our statements on novel weapons must be consistent with that proposal. Therefore, all high level statements on novel weapons should hereafter be consistent with the four points above. Emphasis should be varied by the several media to fit specific target audiences, in accordance with policy guidance to be prepared by the Department of State.

7. Global treatment

a. Before public statements are made on novel weapons, these questions should be answered.

- (1) Does the American Congress or public need this information?
- (2) Will this information really help deter the Kremlin?
- (3) Will this information strengthen or weaken the morale of the free world?
- (4) Are these weapons important enough, and is their completion date near enough, to justify a statement?

b. High-level statements, as contrasted with media play, have a global audience. The content must therefore either represent a compromise between the requirements of different audience groups, or be chosen with the most critical audience group in mind. The primary audience group is the strategically important, potentially neutralist group: West Germany, France, Italy, and the Middle East. Additionally, such statements must be based upon the policies indicated in the President's reduction of armaments speech.

c. Taking the above factors into consideration, the following is recommended as interim basic guidance:

- (1) Emphasize the peaceful purposes of novel inventions, and the uses to which we are putting them.
- (2) Novel weapons are being developed for defensive purposes; we continue actively to seek ways of reducing armaments and controlling armament production.

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- (3) Novel weapons control and conventional weapons control must go hand in hand.
- (4) De-emphasize the mass effect of novel weapons and emphasize the developments in the characteristics of the weapons permitting greater target selectivity.
- (5) We are for control of novel weapons and against city-bombing in principle, but do not make statements which amount to a commitment not to use strategic A-bombing or which might give Soviet leaders assurance of immunity from strategic attack.
- (6) Shift the moral blame to the Soviet leadership for the continued uncontrolled development of strategic novel weapons.
- (7) Emphasize that manpower inequalities between the free-world and Soviet blocs will be greatly minimized by the development of tactical novel weapons; and that the free world can, when these weapons become available, oppose with novel weapons Communist peripheral (cold war) applications of strength without the need of bringing on general war.

Note: The above guidance is not to be construed as absolving officials of their responsibility for obtaining security clearance for statements prepared in conformity thereto.

8. Area Media Treatment

Specific areas require special emphasis in media treatment. The basic effects sought are indicated in Tab C. Department of State should prepare detailed guidances to achieve these effects.

9. The Reduction of Panic Effect

a. Under normal conditions, panic effect is controllable by adherence to the guidance of paragraph 7. In addition, wide publicity in optimistic tones should be given to the state of our air defenses.

b. When war-crises occur, panic tendencies will probably occur.

A guide to treatment at such times is attached ~~as~~ Tab B.

10. Evaluation

The systematic revision of basic guidance requires continuous evaluation of the effects abroad of public statements on novel weapons. Such evaluation should be undertaken by the Psychological Strategy Board.

11. Mechanism for Novel-Weapon Guidance

a. There are at present many mechanisms for coordinating the release of information. None has, however, proven adequate for effective guidance and control of public statements on novel weapons.

b. Policy guidance should be produced by a mechanism which can take into account the responsibilities of the President and of the heads of the departments and agencies concerned and which may thus assure the effective implementation of approved policy. Such a mechanism, furthermore, should be a continuing medium for timely, constructive policies made in an atmosphere of careful deliberation of all factors involved insofar as possible, rather than merely for meeting emergencies or for censorship.

c. Guidance requires continuing revision, to fit:

- (1) Special cases.
- (2) Changes in the facts about novel weapons.
- (3) Changes in security restrictions.
- (4) War-crises.
- (5) Basic changes in U.S. policy.
- (6) Types of novel weapons. A separate guidance for each may become necessary.
- (7) Deception purposes.

d. There should be constituted a Novel Weapons Information Guidance Committee to be charged with providing the information indicated in sub-paragraph c above, as well as with revising, keeping up to date, and issuing national policy guidance on publicity with respect to novel weapons. This committee should be chaired by a member from the White House Staff and should include members from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, Central Intelligence Agency, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, and the Staff of the Psychological Strategy Board, with the latter member acting as Executive Secretary. A representative of the Federal Civil Defense Administration should sit as appropriate with the committee for information of interest to that agency.

e. Although individuals on the highest level of government are engaged in operations of world-wide significance the great majority will, because of immediate pressures, desire, or lack of competent advice, usually discuss novel weapons in the context of the impact upon the domestic audience. Statements made for political or budgetary purposes or under the exhilaration of an audience have been and will continue to be the source most of the unfortunate effects on our psychological operations.

Practice has shown that few individuals can be expected consistently to seek advice from any designated source. No mechanism for clearance of public statements ever has been satisfactory. Consequently, it should be the constant charge of the Novel Weapons Information Guidance Committee to remind officials that plans for psychological operations do exist and that their public statements have an important bearing on those plans. By this means it may be possible to prevent harmful statements and to encourage helpful ones.

f. Department of State should prepare detailed policy guidance in conformity to the PSB guidance included herein or to be issued hereafter.

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g. High-level statements on novel weapons should be prepared in conformity to Department of State guidance. It is desirable that the Director of the Psychological Strategy Board be informed in advance of pending high-level statements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. a. That Tab A, B. and C be approved for issuance to appropriate departments and agencies.
- b. That the coordinating mechanism recommended in sub-paragraph 11 d above be approved, organizing action to be undertaken by the PSB staff.
- c. That the Department of State be assigned the task of preparing Tab B a detailed interim guidance in conformity with Tab A and Tab C.
- d. That the members of PSB authorize the Director to conduct an evaluation of the effects abroad of public statements with respect to novel weapons, using the facilities of the departments and agencies responsible for the conduct of psychological operations.

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TAB - A Interim Novel Weapons Policy - Guidance for High-Level Statements

1. a. Statements and releases on novel weapons should be held to a minimum. Before anything is released, these questions should be answered:

- (1) Does the American Congress or public need this information?
- (2) Will this information really help deter the Kremlin?
- (3) Will this information strengthen or weaken the morale of the free world?
- (4) Are these weapons important enough, and is their completion date near enough, to justify a statement?

b. High-level statements, as contrasted with media play, have a global audience. The content must therefore either represent a compromise between the requirements of different audience groups, or be chosen with the most critical audience group in mind. The primary audience group is the strategically important, potentially neutralist group: West Germany, France, the Middle East. Additionally, such statements must be based upon the policies indicated in the President's reduction of armaments speech.

c. Taking the above factors into consideration, the following constitutes interim basic guidance:

- (1) Emphasize the peaceful purposes of novel inventions, and the uses to which we are putting them.
- (2) Novel weapons are being developed for defensive purposes; we continue actively to seek ways of reducing armaments and controlling armament production.
- (3) Novel weapons control and conventional weapons control must go hand in hand.
- (4) De-emphasize the mass effect of novel weapons and emphasize developments in the characteristics of the weapons permitting greater target selectivity.

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- (5) We are for control of novel weapons and against city-bombing in principle, but do not make statements which (a) amount to a commitment not to use strategic A-bombing, or which (b) might give Soviet leaders assurance of immunity from strategic attack.
- (6) Shift the moral blame to the Soviet leadership for the continued uncontrolled development of strategic novel weapons.
- (7) Emphasize that manpower inequalities between the free-world and Soviet ~~blocs~~ will be greatly minimized by the development of tactical novel weapons; and that the free-world can, when these weapons become available, oppose with novel weapons Communist peripheral (cold war) applications of strength without the need of bringing on general war.

Note: The above guidance is not to be construed as absolving officials of their responsibility for obtaining security clearance for statements prepared in conformity thereto.

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TAB - B Interim Novel Weapons Policy Guidance - The Reduction of Panic Effect

1. a. The panic effect of statements about novel weapons can be reduced by:

- (1) Repetition. This can be accomplished under policy controls by authorizing low-level government officials to make frequent statements, in accordance with national policy guidance.
- (2) Wide publicity, within security limits, of the tactical uses for novel weapons.
- (3) Wide publicity, in optimistic tones, of the state of our air defenses.



b. The public will become accustomed, in normal periods, to the fact of novel weapons. However, when crisis events occur where war or peace is in the balance, there will probably be widespread panic tendencies which will have a crippling effect on freedom of policy decision if not controlled.

At such times, high-level statements must be made, which:

- (1) Re-assure about the quality of our air defenses (with secondary deterrent effect on the USSR).
- (2) Assure that the USSR will attack only military targets.
(Thus heightening the moral guilt should they violate, while at the same time reducing panic fear).
- (3) Assure West European audiences that defense plans call for the selective use of novel weapons in East Europe, and for holding as far to the east as practicable.
- (4) Statements which vaguely imply (without commitment) that we will bomb only military targets, and will use selective weapons in congested areas.

Note: the above guidance is not to be construed as absolving officials of their responsibility for obtaining security clearance for statements prepared in conformity thereto.

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a. The primary aim is to deter the Soviet leaders from further aggression. Presumably the facts of our atomic superiority are sufficiently well known to them to provide a serious deterrent. Presumably, too, there are discreet ways to keep them impressed with our superiority without resorting to broadside statements which do harm in other parts of the world.

b. A secondary aim is to avoid helping the Soviet leaders rally the Soviet peoples for war. Indiscriminate use of novel weapon information (especially if there is any suggestion of gloating over prospective devastation) may help the Kremlin exact greater efforts from the people.

c. A third aim is to make the Kremlin responsible in the eyes of the Soviet peoples for any calamity which may come upon them.

2. Satellite Peoples

a. In general, the satellite peoples want general war as a means to liberation, and consequently show little tendency to neutralism resulting from fear of novel weapons. Hate of the regime submerges their fears. As general war, however, is contrary to our policy, we must not exploit novel weapons toward this area in the context of bringing general war nearer.

b. We should not emphasize novel weapons toward the satellites, except in ways which keep them aware of our growing strength, and particularly of our vast economic superiority. For this purpose, we should emphasize the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the scientific rather than military aspects of other novel weapons.

3. Strategic Free-World Areas

a. These include:

(1) The leaders and peoples of strategically important, potentially neutralist areas:

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- (a) France, Italy and Western Germany.
- (b) The Middle East
- (2) The leaders and peoples of strategic but not potentially neutralist areas:
 - (a) British Empire
 - (b) Turkey
 - (c) The United States
 - (d) Japan

4. Treatment Toward Strategic Free-World Areas

a. Toward strategic, potentially neutralist areas and strategic not potentially neutralist areas, the policy problem is similar except in relative importance. In strategic, potentially neutralist areas the panic, depressant effect of psychological involvement regarding novel weapons could prove a vital factor in causing decisive adverse shifts in the balance of power. Attitudes existing in this area toward the role of novel weapons are probably more vital to our power position than in either the Soviet or satellite areas:

- (1) because these areas are strategically vital;
- (2) because they will be the scene of active conflict, and the presumption is therefore that novel weapons will be used there;
- (3) because present indications are that this territory will be fought over twice (occupied and liberated).

b. The strategic, but not potentially neutralist areas are important.

- (1) because the visceral effect upon the leaders of knowledge regarding novel weapons will exacerbate policy differences, and impose strains of decision-making;
- (2) because the confusion and panic tendencies of the peoples will have distracting policy influence on the leaders.

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5. The basic policy guidance for both these areas is therefore:

- a. De-emphasize the mass effect of novel weapons and emphasize the developments in the characteristics of the weapons permitting greater target selectivity.
- b. Shift the moral blame to the Soviet leadership for the continued uncontrolled development of strategic novel weapons.
- c. Emphasize that manpower inequalities between the non-Soviet and Soviet blocs will be rectified by tactical A-weapons and other novel weapons; and that the free world can now oppose with novel weapons Communist peripheral (cold war) applications of strength without the need of bringing on general war.

6. Non-Strategic Asiatic Nations

Toward Asiatic nations, we should aim at reducing the effects of the moral guilt Asiatics habitually fix upon us by:

- a. Normally, avoiding statements to these areas regarding novel weapons.
- b. Emphasizing, when statements are required, possible use in Europe, and the lack of strategic targets in Asia.
- c. Emphasizing the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

Note: The above guidance is not to be construed as absolving officials of their responsibility for obtaining security clearance for statements prepared in conformity thereto.

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